

HONORING KENNETH LASITER

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 22, 2010

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Kenneth Lasiter upon being awarded with the "Lifetime Achievement Award" by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 9896. Mr. Lasiter was honored on Saturday, January 30, 2010 in Chowchilla, California.

Mr. Kenneth Lasiter was born in Merced, California in 1946. He graduated from Chowchilla High School, where he played on two championship football teams. Mr. Lasiter attended Fresno City College for 1 year and in 1966 he enlisted in the United States Army. He completed basic training at Fort Ord, California, where he fired "expert" with the M-14 rifle. Mr. Lasiter went to Fort Rucker, Alabama for Aircraft Maintenance School; he completed training with a specialty in helicopter maintenance and repair. He also completed courses in the Code of Conduct and Military Justice.

After completing stateside training, Mr. Lasiter was ordered to Vietnam in March 1967. He joined the 655th Transportation Detachment, 12th Combat Aviation Brigade. The 12th Brigade had deployed to Vietnam in 1965 and consisted of 11,000 personnel and 34 aviation units. The Brigade was based at Long Binh in the III Military Region in Vietnam and was the largest unit of its type to serve in combat.

Mr. Lasiter spent 12 months in Vietnam. During that time he flew combat missions as a door gunner on HU-1B and UH-1D "Huey" Helicopters. He was promoted to crew chief and was later selected to act as crew chief for the group commander. During this time there was increased hostility as regular North Vietnamese forces made their way down the Ho Chi Minh Trail through Laos and Cambodia into South Vietnam. Mr. Lasiter's units flew assault, medical and supply missions to fire bases and in support of ground forces. Mr. Lasiter was part of the cadre that assisted the 1st Air Cavalry when it deployed from the states to Bien Hoa, Vietnam.

Upon completing his 12-month tour in Vietnam, Mr. Lasiter returned to the United States. While on leave he married Carolyn. The newlyweds flew to Germany, where Mr. Lasiter assumed duties at the Wirtheim Army Airfield and was the acting crew chief with CH-23 units.

Specialist 5 Lasiter was released from active duty in September 1969. For his service, Mr. Lasiter was awarded the Army Commendation Medal, the Air Medal with seven oak leaf clusters, the National Defense Service Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal, the Vietnam Campaign Medal with device, the Aircraft Crewman Badge and Expert Rifle and Sharpshooter Badges.

Upon returning to civilian life, Mr. and Mrs. Lasiter made their home in Chowchilla, California. Mr. Lasiter attended Merced College. He then started a lifelong career in farming. Mr. Lasiter is a Life Member of Chowchilla Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 9896 and is a member of the Cornerstone Community Church. Mr. and Mrs. Lasiter continue to live in Chowchilla. They have two children and three grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Kenneth Lasiter upon being named as a "Distinguished Life Member" by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 9896. I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing Mr. Lasiter many years of continued success.

THE CONGRESSIONAL YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL: A LEGACY OF SERVICE**HON. SAM JOHNSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 22, 2010

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I ask my fellow colleagues to join me in congratulating the 2009-2010 Congressional Youth Advisory Council. This year 45 students from public, private, and home schools in grades 9 through 12 made their voices heard and made a difference in their communities, their country, and their Congress. These students volunteered their time, effort, and talent to inform me about the important issues facing their generation. As young leaders within their communities and their schools, these students boldly represent the promise and the hope we all have for their very bright future.

President Ronald Reagan said, "Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same, or one day we will spend our sunset years telling our children and our children's children what it was once like in the United States where men were free."

To ensure that the blessing of freedom is passed from one generation to the next, the members of the CYAC spent time interviewing a veteran and documenting the experience for the "Preserving History Project." Today I'm proud to submit the brief summaries provided so the patriotic service of our dedicated veterans and the thoughtful work of the CYAC may be preserved for antiquity in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. A copy of each submitted student summary follows.

To each member of the Congressional Youth Advisory Council, thank you for making this year and this group a success. It is not a coincidence that this congressional tribute celebrates two generations of service. Each of you is trusted with the precious gift of freedom.

You are the voices of the future and I salute you. God bless you and God bless America.

The summary follows:

I, Kathryn Boswell interviewed Reba Leonard, SSG of the United States Army. She was part of the technology branch and was stationed in San Antonio, Germany, and Pensacola. From this experience, I have learned about sacrifice for your country, camaraderie with fellow soldiers, and the effect serving in the military has on a life. Reba is a strong woman and has learned from her experiences in the army to live life to the fullest and "keep a bigger perspective on life." It's not just about me, it's about the wellbeing of the people around me. She worked on the first computers, and was able to communicate live time from Germany to Maryland in the 1980s. She also worked off the first portable hard-drive. She is a computer specialist at McAfee and has raised two boys in Plano, Texas.—Kathryn Boswell

ON HOUSE RESOLUTION TO REDUCE THE USE OF PLASTIC AND PAPER BAGS**HON. JAMES P. MORAN**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 22, 2010

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, as we mark the 40th anniversary of Earth Day, I ask my colleagues to consider cosponsoring a resolution I am introducing today to reduce the use of plastic and paper bags.

Single-use retail plastic and paper bags are bad for the environment. Both paper and plastic bags consume valuable natural resources when produced, generate waste, and pollute the environment. They keep us dependent on nonrenewable resources and impose external costs that we bear in the form of higher waste disposal costs, visual blight, the destruction of wildlife and the deaths of tens of thousands of animal and marine life by entangling them in the plastic or poisoning them through toxins that leach into the ground and waterways. We use more than 100 billion plastic bags every year and because they don't biodegrade, each bag represents a persistent threat to the environment.

While paper bags are less harmful to the environment, they require four times as much energy to produce and generate 70 percent more air pollution and 50 times more water pollution than plastic bags. And while recycling efforts should be applauded, recycling rates are dismally low. Between one and three percent of all plastic bags are recycled and between ten and 15 percent of all paper bags are recycled.

The resolution encourages states to establish targets for businesses to reduce distribution of plastic and paper bag use by 40 percent over the next five years; educate the public about using reusable bags through public-private initiatives, public awareness campaigns, and other methods whenever possible; and facilitate the dissemination of best practices among businesses for reducing single-use retail bag consumption. It would also encourage businesses to adopt consumer credit programs to promote reusable bag use.

One need look no further than the District of Columbia to measure success. Late last year the District imposed a 5 cent tax on plastic bags which led to a dramatic impact on bag use. The number of plastic bags used by supermarkets and other establishments dropped from the 2009 monthly average of 22.5 million to just 3 million in January 2010.

I could conclude here, but that would be only half the story. This resolution was brought to my attention by two enterprising Georgetown University students, Mariel Reed and Brian Lin. Together with their fellow classmates they drafted the resolution in response to a bill I introduced last year to tax plastic and paper bag use. They used my bill as a case study on environmental legislation. Both students are very bright and realized that there is little prospect my bag tax bill would be enacted. My bill does point toward a worthwhile objective, and it builds on the actions of several local and foreign initiatives that have met with success. But, there is no group or organization that has backed it and few Members today prefer to be on record supporting a tax increase.